

COMMITTEE OF CONCERN MEETING

Wednesday, July 19, 1967, 7:00 p.m.

Rutgers Law School

180 University Avenue, Newark

PRESIDING: Co-chairmen Oliver Lofton, Director of the Newark Legal Services Project, and Malcolm D. Talbott, Vice President of Rutgers University

Mr. Talbott made the following announcements:

A committee has been appointed by Governor Hughes to investigate causal factors in the incidents and occurrences during the past week in Newark.

Prudential Insurance Company has donated \$20,000 to the Emergency Relief Fund of the United Community Corporation to be used in relief in the riot area.

PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Lofton read a statement which had been given to the press at a news conference earlier in the day. The statement listed three major areas of concern demanding immediate attention: employment, housing and education. In addition, the following committees have been formed: Planning and Zoning, Communications, Legal Affairs, Voter Registration and Welfare and Health.

Conversations have been held with U. S. Attorney General Clark and Roger Wilkins, director of the U. S. Community Relations Service and Bertram Levine, assistant director. Mr. Talbott stated that city officials will be asked to invite these men to Newark to study the factors involved in the riots in Newark.

In a discussion period following remarks by Messrs. Lofton and Talbott, Rev. H. P. Sharper voiced the opinion that if business leaders from firms such as Fidelity Union, Bamberger's and Prudential had spoken to the Mayor and Police Director Spina, some of the incidents which occurred may have been avoided. Rev. Sharper further stated that he disagrees with the Committee of Concern's refusal to deal with police brutality. He felt that one of the gravest factors in the whole situation was "prosperity in the midst of poverty." He said banks had refused to lend Negroes money. He stated that meetings of the Committee should be held in the Central Ward where the Negroes are. He further stated that the people present in the meeting are not prepared to determine what Negroes want.

Mr. Talbott replied that what Rev. Sharper said was true. He said business leaders will be asked to become actively involved in programs of the Committee. Mr. Talbott further said that 17 residents of the Central Ward had met with businessmen in the Law School on July 18. The Committee will try to schedule meetings in the Central Ward. Something will be done about the lending of money to Negroes.

In reply to a statement by Mr. Talbott that cases of police brutality would be referred to the proper legal sources, Mr. George Richardson stated that he sensed "some kind of compromise." Mr. Richardson said that cases of police brutality are already "referred" by Mayor Addonizio. Mr. Richardson further stated that not only is police brutality an issue, but that the whole range of police-community relations is involved.

Mr. Luis Moroze suggested that Negro leaders from the ghetto be deputized in view of their relationship with the community.

Mr. Talbott said that if we are to have the fullest support, the Committee must not be political.

Mr. Robert Curvin stated that we need a certain quality of support. He referred to the Medical School and to the problem of merchants. He said that in order to get this support, specific cases have to be worked out. He termed Newark a city of "powerlessness."

Mr. Murray Aboff thought that the Attorney General and the Senate should be asked to investigate what he termed atrocities in Newark. He said the first thing the Committee should do is ask the Attorney General to personally come to Newark. He further stated that we cannot trust the city administration. He estimated that if something is not done in the distressed areas immediately, Newark would become a "poor" town because all the whites and the middle-class Negroes would move elsewhere.

Mr. Al Brown cited a specific incident two months ago in which he witnessed an unprovoked attack by a Newark detective on a Negro. When he tried to relate the occurrence to Police Director Spina he was insulted by Mr. Spina. Mr. Brown felt that the Rutgers Law School was not the place to have a meeting because it is merely "an extension of white power in the eyes of the ghetto Negro."

It was moved by Miss Estelle Greenberg that the Committee continue with the committees named on July 18. The motion was seconded.

Following the carrying of Miss Greenberg's motion, the gathering broke up into committee meetings. Attached are emergency recommendations from the committees.